

**To:** Higuchi, Dean[Higuchi.Dean@epa.gov]  
**From:** Dean Higuchi  
**Sent:** Wed 8/12/2015 10:44:25 PM  
**Subject:** Statement, Photos & Audio from EPA Administrator in Durango, CO

CONTACT:  
press@epa.gov  
(970) 812-3351

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 12, 2015

Statement, Photos & Audio from EPA Administrator in Durango, CO

Today, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy visited Durango, CO to inspect response efforts relating to the release of waste water from Gold King mine, and meet with state, local and tribal officials and community members. Tomorrow, Administrator McCarthy will visit the response efforts in Farmington, NM. More details about the visit will be released as they become available.

While in Durango, Administrator McCarthy attended a briefing at the Unified EPA Area Command where she discussed promising new data from August 7th, 8th, and 9th that is showing water quality levels in the Animas River near Durango similar to pre-event conditions. EPA is continuing to work with local community officials tasked with making decisions about public health. Later this afternoon EPA scientists will be meeting with those officials to discuss the new data and any decisions moving forward.

Photos: Photos from EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy's trip to Durango, CO to inspect response efforts relating to the release of waste water from Gold King mine, and meet with state, local and tribal officials and community members.

Audio: Audio from EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy's remarks and press conference at the Unified EPA Area Command in Durango, CO, on response efforts relating to the release of waste water from Gold King Mine.

Following the briefing, the Administrator held a press briefing at the Unified EPA Area Command in Durango. The following remarks can be attributed to EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy:

No agency could be more upset about the incident happening, and more dedicated in doing our job to get this right. We couldn't be more sorry. Our mission is to protect human health and the environment. We will hold ourselves to a higher standard than anyone else.

I want to assure the general public as well as the leaders in the states, the counties and the tribal leaders, that we are working hand in hand with our partners to expedite this review, to expedite some return to normalcy in terms of using this river.

The river is returning to pre-event conditions. This is very good news, but we will be working with our partners so they have a chance to review this data thoroughly and have a chance to talk through this data in terms of what it means to their decisions moving forward. We are going to let this high quality and reliable science be our guide.

From this point on, the data will continue to come out. And that's what's going to influence decisions on what should happen in this river and in the affected counties.

For additional information on the response to the Gold King Mine release [www.epa.gov/goldkingmine](http://www.epa.gov/goldkingmine)